

The purpose of this document is to compile resources and information for state leaders on the education of students with disabilities during the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) global pandemic.

Federal Guidance and Resources

- On Saturday, March 21, the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services and the Office of Civil Rights issued [additional guidance on serving students with disabilities](#) during school closures related to COVID-19 to states, districts, and schools. A few highlights:
 - Ensuring compliance with IDEA, Section 504, and ADA should not prevent any school from offering educational programs through distance instruction
 - School districts still must provide students with disabilities a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in accordance with IDEA
 - Providing for FAPE may include special education and related services virtually, online, and via telephone
- On Thursday, March 12, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) at US ED released [a questions and answers \(Q&A\) document](#) outlining states' responsibilities on providing services to children with disabilities during the coronavirus disease 2019 outbreak.
 - On Friday, March 13, OSEP, the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and the Council for Administrators of Special Education (CASE) hosted [a joint webinar to review the Q&A guidance from OSEP](#) on the education of students with disabilities during COVID-19 for state and local directors of special education.

State and Local Guidance and Resources

State:

- ⊘ The **Arkansas** Department of Education provides [guidance on special education services](#) for districts during extended school closures. Districts must provide an Alternative Methods of Instruction (AMI) plan, including how they will serve students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The impact of AMI must be considered for each child.
- ⊘ The **California** Department of Education has issued [guidance for districts on special education](#) and [guidance for online learning](#), including the accessibility of resources for students with disabilities and strategies to promote their engagement in a virtual environment.
- ⊘ The **Delaware** Department of Education provides [guidance](#) on IDEA, part B and the provision of FAPE during closures related to the novel coronavirus. Additionally, the Delaware Department has identified [learning activities by grade level for students identified for special education services](#), which can be found at the bottom of this page. Activities include accessible books that can be speech enabled and accessed using multiple interfaces and printable picture cards available to promote functional communication in children with Autism.
- ⊘ The **Florida** Department of Education (FDOE) provides guidance for [consideration for students with disabilities](#), who are particularly vulnerable, and continuing support from the state's educators is critical during these uncertain times. To the greatest extent they are able, it is

important schools tailor distance learning to provide educational benefits to their students with disabilities. FDOE also did a [webinar with the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Students Services \(BEES\)](#) on this topic to provide guidance on students with IEPs, 504 Plans or Gifted Plans.

- € The **Indiana** Department of Education provides [e-learning guidance on the education of students with disabilities](#), including reflection questions for educators as they seek to accommodate online learning resources and discuss and document students' IEPs.
- € The **Louisiana** Department of Education (LDOE) has released [a guide to providing related and direct services](#) to students with disabilities in distance learning environments along with a [resource for families supporting students with disabilities](#) during continuous learning, including tips and resources on organization, accommodations, and accessibility. LDOE also provides [guidance and tools to help districts maintain compliance](#) with special education timelines and requirements, including up-to-date guidance from the U.S. Department of Education.
- € The **Massachusetts** Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) provides a [webpage of information and resources for special educators](#), including Zoom meeting conference topics (e.g., IEP timelines, virtual IEP meetings) and answers to frequently asked questions on special education. DESE encourages districts and schools to use reading lists, online lessons, work packets, or other available learning approaches using appropriate modifications and accommodations for students with disabilities and encourages educators, counselors, and related service providers to reach out to students and families by phone, email, and other means of communication during school closures related to COVID-19.
- € The **Minnesota** Department of Education (MDE) provides [resources on special education instruction, services, programming, and funding](#) in response to COVID-19. This guidance includes information on teleservices and HIPAA and FERPA compliance related to provision of services during closure related to novel coronavirus.
- € The **Mississippi** Department of Education (MDE) [encourages districts to use distance technology](#) (e.g., Zoom, conference calls, Skype, etc.) to the extent possible to provide IEP and evaluation meetings if staff and parents are available. MDE also released resources for students in pre-K through grade 12 to support student learning during the extended school closure, including [resources for students with visual and hearing impairments](#) and their parents and families.
- € The **Nebraska** Department of Education provides a question and answer (Q&A) document for providing special education and early intervention during coronavirus school closures based on federal guidance along with [a list of additional resources to support special educators](#) in transitioning to online instruction and services for students with disabilities.
- € The **Rhode Island** Department of Education regularly updates a list of [K-12 distance learning resources](#), including accessible online learning platforms and literacy support for students who are blind, students who are deaf, and struggling readers, including students with dyslexia.

- € The **Tennessee** Department of Education created a [school closure toolkit for special populations](#) that includes a district and school checklist for supporting special populations of students, best practices for supporting students with disabilities and additional service needs, recommended schedules and procedures, and a list of resources for district and school leaders.
- € The **Washington** Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction provides a list of [online professional learning opportunities for educators](#) on supporting students with disabilities and a [school closure tracking form](#) to assist districts in tracking special education timelines and services for individual students during school closures.
- € The **Wisconsin** Department of Public Instruction has provided a [frequently-asked question resource](#) on supporting students who learn differently during extended closures including on individualized education programs, evaluations, and early childhood education supports.

Local:

- € Arlington County Public Schools in Virginia provides a list of [resources for families of students with disabilities](#) that include general strategies, resources, and online curricula to access from home. Resources cover topics such as assistive technology, occupational and physical therapy, sensory and self-regulation, sign language, social emotional learning, speech and language, and math and literacy across all grade levels.
- € The Center for Reinventing Public Education (CRPE) provides a [preliminary review of how districts are responding to COVID-19](#), including whether the district provides modified lessons and/or tools for students with disabilities. The site will be updated continuously.
- € The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) provides printed packets of learning materials for every grade level from Pre-K through 12th grade that are designed to meet the needs of all learners, including students with disabilities. Parents and families can pick up these resources at their child’s school to use at home during school closures. DCPS also provides a [free online platform for students with disabilities and their families](#) to access lessons, activities, and other resources including resources on inclusion, related services (e.g., audiology, occupational and physical therapy, speech pathology), sensory support, and special education process guidance.
- € Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) in Michigan provides a variety of online resources, with [specific resources for the education of students with disabilities](#) including those with hearing impairments, speech and language needs, and autism spectrum disorder.
- € Fresno Unified School District in California provides [daily learning plans and sample schedules for students](#), including students with disabilities.

Resources from National & Local Organizations

- € The National Center on Systemic Improvement (NCSI) is a national technical assistance center designated by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to provide support to states on the education of students with disabilities during COVID-19. NCSI tracks [federal and state guidance](#) on supporting students with disabilities during this time and provides resources to support

educators in transitioning to virtual learning. States can submit questions and resources to NCSI using [this link](#). In the next few days, all resources will be included on [the NCSI Library](#).

- € The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) is another national technical assistance center designated by ED to provide support to states on the education of children with disabilities during COVID-19 school closures. ECTA provides [daily updates on COVID-19 and tele-intervention and distance learning resources](#).
- € The [Center on Online Learning and Students with Disabilities](#) has resources on making online learning more accessible, engaging, and effective for students with disabilities, including a:
 - [Brief on considerations for SEA policies and procedures](#) related to online learning for students with disabilities
 - [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\) Scan Tool and supporting resources](#) to ensure that instructional materials and learning experiences are accessible
 - Comprehensive report [Equity Matters 2016: Digital and Online Learning for Students with Disabilities](#), which includes a literature review, policy scan, and suggestions for the online learning of students with disabilities
- € The Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) provides a [resource with considerations for local special education administrators](#), including how students will be provided with special education and related services in a virtual environment.
- € The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) has developed **COVID-19 Information for Special Educators**, including a forum for members on how to adapt IEP services during school closures. CEC is currently offering [free membership](#) through May 2020 so that practicing and aspiring teachers can access their materials and forums for free.
 - On Thursday, March 19th, CEC and eLuma co-hosted a webinar on **teaching special education online during COVID-19**. A link to the webinar, slide deck, and a repository of free teacher resources can be [found here](#).
- € Diverse Learners Coop provides districts and schools with [practical considerations and steps for conducting successful online IEP](#) meetings for students across grade levels.
- € Eye to Eye provides [resources for students with learning differences](#) and those with attention issues as well as for their educators and families.
- € The Michigan Virtual Learning Institute provides a [resource to support IEP teams and educators](#) in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of instructional supports and related services for students with disabilities in online learning environments.
- The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) provides [guidance to parents and families on how to talk to their children about COVID-19](#) to reduce stress and misinformation. The resource can support all students, including those with disabilities, and is also available in multiple languages (see sidebar in the link above).

- The National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools offers a [resource guide for educators and school practitioners to meet the needs of students with disabilities](#) during necessary school transitions due to the pandemic.
- ⊘ The National Center on Learning Disabilities has [resources for parents and educators](#) on best practices for serving students with disabilities in online environments.
- ⊘ The National Disability Rights Network has gathered a [set of resources](#) including on accommodating online teaching strategies, parent support, and student privacy.
- ⊘ Jennifer Kurth, Associate Professor of Special Education at the University of Kansas, has compiled the [Distance Learning for Special Education website](#). The site contains open source materials to support students with disabilities compiled from educators and families from around the world.
- ⊘ The State Educational Technology Directors Association offers [strategies and resources for ensuring that online learning supports students with IEPs](#), including tools to create and curate accessible educational materials from the National Center on Accessible Educational Materials and tips for implementing Universal Design for Learning from CAST.
- Understood for Educators provides [resources for educators and families of students with disabilities](#), including how to talk to students about COVID-19, strategies for connecting with students during school closures, and best practices for distance learning.
- The University of North Carolina has developed [a toolkit to support families and their children with autism](#) during school closures due to COVID-19. The toolkit contains seven support strategies for students with autism and accompanying examples and resources.